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News Release | For Immediate Release

**State Farm™ Releases Top Ten States for Dog Bite Claims in 2016
Dog Bite Claims Increased 15 Percent over the Past Year**

Bloomington, Ill (April 6, 2017) — Children make up more than 50% of all dog bite victims. Twelve year old Madison Buckley is one of them. In November 2015 Madison and her mom, State Farm agent Carmen Contreras, were on the hunt for a new home. While visiting a potential new house, Madison and her mom were greeted at the door by a dog. “I went to pet him and he came up on me and went for my face. I was in shock,” said Madison. The dog lunged at her face but Madison blocked the attack with her arm. She escaped with a cut and a few scratches but the emotional scar has left her with a fear of dogs. [National Dog Bite Prevention Week®](#) is April 9-15, 2017. In 2016 [State Farm](#) paid over \$121 million as a result of 3,660 dog bite claims, an increase of 15 percent. Over the past decade State Farm has paid over \$1 billion for dog-related injury claims.

State Farm: Top 10 States for Dog-Related Injury Claims

State	Number of Dog-Related Injury Claims	Amount Paid for Dog-Related Injury Claims
1. California	433 claims	\$16.8 million
2. Illinois	323 claims	\$13.9 million
3. Ohio	211 claims	\$ 7.5 million
4. Pennsylvania	200 claims	\$ 4.8 million
5. Texas	168 claims	\$ 3.1 million
6. Michigan	167 claims	\$ 4.4 million
7. New York	156 claims	\$10.4 million
8. Indiana	137 claims	\$ 3.0 million
9. Georgia	125 claims	\$ 3.4 million
10. Minnesota	122 claims	\$ 3.3 million

Source: State Farm - Homeowner, Renter, Farm & Ranch, and Commercial property claims

State Farm does not exclude homeowners or renters insurance coverage because of the breed of dog owned. Under the right circumstances, any dog might bite, regardless of breed. Homeowners should talk to their insurance agent about coverage under a standard homeowner policy. “Many people don’t think to add a [personal liability umbrella policy \(PLUP\)](#) to provide extra coverage in case their dog does bite someone,” says Contreras. “Homeowners think about fire or theft to their home but don’t think their dog would bite anyone so they may be financially



vulnerable if it ever happens.” Renters should consider getting renters insurance. Most landlords do not provide coverage should there be a dog bite incident.

State Farm works with renowned dog trainer Victoria Stilwell and focuses on educating people about responsible dog ownership and understanding dog body language.

“Educating the general public about dog bite prevention is more vital than ever,” says Stilwell. “As a dog behavior expert, I support the need to raise awareness and stop these incidents from occurring.”

Stilwell recommends the following tips to keep people safe from dog bites.

1. **Learn canine body language.** Too often people misunderstand or miss signals that a dog is uncomfortable. For example, a dog that yawns might not necessarily be tired. Yawning can also be a sign of stress.
2. **Give dogs space.** Dogs can feel threatened when strange people touch them, so take pressure off by giving them the choice to come into your space first to say hello.
3. **Be humane.** Dogs that are raised and trained humanely are more confident and less likely to bite than dogs that are trained using punitive methods or equipment designed to intimidate and cause pain.

State Farm will participate in various educational opportunities during the week to reinforce the importance of being safe and responsible around dogs.

- [National Animal Care and Control Appreciation Week](#) is April 9-15, 2017. State Farm Good Neighbor Crews will visit Animal Control departments in 16 cities and surprise them with trays of sweet treats. Teams will also provide supplies for new pet adopters.
- State Farm Good Neighbor Crews will surprise dog owners at 24 dog parks during National Dog Bite Prevention Week. Teams will distribute information about responsible pet ownership and have treats for dogs.
- State Farm agents will be in classrooms demonstrating dog safety. Elementary school children will learn how to greet a dog during educational demonstrations featuring Richard Nash and [Hudson the Railroad Puppy](#), [Roo Yori the K9 Ninja](#), and Michele Shaffer-Stevens with [Aladdin](#).

Members of the National Dog Bite Prevention Coalition include [State Farm](#), [Victoria Stilwell](#), [Insurance Information Institute](#), [United States Postal Service](#), [American Humane](#), and the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#). Join the discussion and share tips on being safe and responsible around dogs by using the hashtag #preventdogbites.

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About Victoria Stilwell

Victoria Stilwell is a world-renowned dog trainer, TV personality, author and public speaker best known as the star of the international hit TV series *Greatest American Dog* and [It's Me or the Dog](#), through which she reaches audiences in over 100 countries. The torchbearer for force-free positive reinforcement dog training methods, Stilwell is the Editor-in-Chief of [Positively.com](#) and



is the CEO of both Victoria Stilwell, Inc. and [Victoria Stilwell Positively Dog Training](#) (VSPDT): the world's premier global network of positive reinforcement dog trainers. A co-founder of the National Dog Bite Prevention Task Force, Stilwell is also committed to helping the cause of animal rescue and rehabilitation, working closely with organizations around the world to increase awareness about puppy mills, dogfighting, animal abuse, pet overpopulation, dog bite prevention, breed-specific legislation and other animal-related issues. Appearing frequently in the global media, Stilwell is widely recognized as a leader in the field of animal behavior. She serves on the Advisory Boards of DogTV, Dognition, RedRover and Canine Assistants. She is also the CEO of the Victoria Stilwell Foundation, providing animal behavior expertise and funding to smaller rescue shelters and positive training-based canine assistance organizations.

About State Farm™

The mission of State Farm is to help people manage the risks of everyday life, recover from the unexpected, and realize their dreams. State Farm and its affiliates are the largest providers of [auto](#) and [home](#) insurance in the United States. Its nearly 19,000 agents and nearly 70,000 employees serve more than 84 million policies and accounts – more than 81 million auto, fire, life, health and commercial policies, and more than 2 million bank accounts. Commercial auto insurance, along with coverage for renters, business owners, boats and motorcycles, is available. State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company is the parent of the State Farm family of companies. State Farm is ranked No. 35 on the 2016 Fortune 500 list of largest companies. For more information, please visit <http://www.statefarm.com>.